

REMARKS

This response is being presented in response to the Examiner's action of September 22, 2003. The Examiner has indicated that claims 17-32 are allowable and has closed prosecution on the merits. In light of the following amendments and comments, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner notes that claims 17-32 have been allowed. Only formal matters remain pending and therefore this amendment is being presented according to the procedures under ex Parte Quayle.

The Examiner notes that certified copies of the priority documents have not been received. As discussed previously with the Examiner, this application is a §371, national stage application off of international application PCT/DE97//01870. Certified copies of the priority document were filed during the international stage of the application. As confirmed by Mr. Mike Neas, of the PCT Help Desk at the USPTO, PCT rule 17.2(a) states:

Where the applicant has complied with Rule 17.1(a) or (b), the International Bureau shall, at the specific request of the designated Office, promptly but not prior to the international publication of the international application, furnish a copy of the priority document to that Office. No such Office shall ask the applicant himself to furnish it with a copy. (emphasis added)

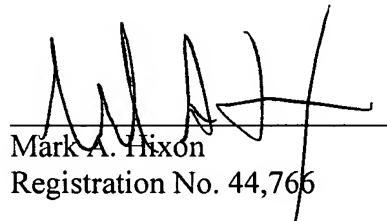
It is therefore respectfully submitted that it is the responsibility of the USPTO to obtain a certified copy of the priority document from the International Bureau, and that the applicant is not responsible for providing said document.

In addition, the Examiner indicated that new drawings were required with this submission. Therefore, please find submitted herewith two sheets of replacement drawings, labeled as required by 37 CFR 1.84. These replacement sheets do not contain substantive changes but instead have been presented in a more formal manner. Annotated sheets **have not** been presented with these replacement sheets, as they are not believed to be necessary for explanation of the replacement sheets.

In addition, the Examiner required a new abstract be submitted with this amendment. In response thereto, the abstract on file has been deleted and a new abstract has been presented herein. It is submitted that no new matter has been added by this change. It is submitted that the new abstract complies with all United States Patent Office Requirements.

In view of the above remarks, a favorable reconsideration of the present application and the passing of this application to issue with all claims allowed are courteously solicited. If the Examiner wishes to modify any of the language of the claims in an effort to move the application towards allowance, a telephone call to the undersigned would be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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